

mers. It stated that Henry Chalmers could not vote for Richard Cressy for Speaker of the lower house of Congress, because Cressy was a Unitarian. Chalmers wrote that this faith was beyond the pale.

"Remember, Worthington, that Templeton Kingsley, candidate of Wall Street, is high in that church. If they pick up Chalmers, both candidates explode when we spring this letter. We'll get the six unpledged States on the very issue by annexing Brothers, who founded the Pan-Religious Congress. It'll go through like a charm," said Blake, puffing and glittering as his watchchain rattled with his mirth.

HENDERSON slept a righteous and late sleep next morning. When he emerged from the breakfast room, O'Terrell and the other correspondents congratulated or chaffed him, according to the terms of their acquaintance. Henderson was surprised that anyone had seen "The Scoop."

"They're all over town," said Jenkins, a "Scoop" cub reporter.

Henderson resolved that he had better call on Worthington. That leader was much surprised to know of "The Scoop's" new-found omnipresence; but he remarked that the first step did not matter so much.

All day Chalmers' friends besieged Blake and Worthington. They refused to change their smiles or to dilute their unctious.

"We had to put all the weight on for Clayton," they told everybody. "Chalmers is a high-class man. We favor him for a portfolio. But he is opposed to Clayton's policy of pooling farm produce and exempting labor unions from injunctions. That would confuse everything."

NOT much news, Tom," announced Worthington that night. "But I do believe that my old newspaper instinct gave me a good hint today. Wall Street will pick up Chalmers for Vice President."

Henderson fidgeted in his chair. It was growing late. If Worthington's "instinct" was correct, the story would prove the most important of the convention preliminaries.

"Chalmers, my boy, is a conservative, it is true," said Worthington; "but he is Western. His selection by Wall Street would split the Western vote and prevent its union on Clayton. I begin to think that we made a mistake in renouncing Chalmers."

Henderson promised to print the story as coming from an anonymous source, and next morning "The Scoop" flashed it in red ink to over one thousand delegates. The goldfish in Wall Street bit, all right, and the following morning "The Scoop" and every other paper announced that Kingsley and Chalmers were to be the "union ticket." Worthington gave Henderson

a little item about the new chairman of the national committee as the day's exclusive contribution.

About this time Senator Blake went home. His sister was dying, and the great man felt that the public eye would rest on him approvingly if he hurried away—with proper newspaper notices. This was Worthington's rain again; but the Senator had furnished the cloud by having a sister who proved mortal at the proper time. His was Opportunity's chosen panel; but they were Worthington's ears that heard the knocking.

"I'm sorry 'The Scoop' is being read so widely here, Mr. Worthington," remarked Henderson, lying blithely to the Congressman that night.

"Never mind, Thomas: it doesn't seem to have hurt us yet," said the politician comfortingly. "Even though we lose, I am glad that I was able to do a little for you at your first big convention. Yes, Sir, it looks like Kingsley and Chalmers! If they were only vulnerable somewhere! But I have searched the armor of their records in vain."

Next morning "The Scoop" made much of that point of invulnerability. It quoted the trope about "the armor of their records," and indicated pretty well that only one convention leader had a tongue picturesque enough to have framed that figure. "The Scoop" story dealt a bit with Chalmers, repeating a conversation with an anonymous leader who had pointed to the congeniality of the views and the friendships of Kingsley and Chalmers.

SURROUNDED entirely by perspiration, Clayton came next morning to see Worthington. He was clutching like a barb to his breast the morning "Scoop."

"Senator Blake and I," elocuted Worthington, "let you come to this convention with the understanding that you were to place yourself and your destiny entirely in our hands. You were an unnamed candidate, and you could afford to be present. Kingsley had to remain at home. Now go back to your room and have faith, Governor, in those who have justified your confidence heretofore."

The sonorous voice of Worthington restored confidence to the candidate, who went back to his room and predicted his success to newspaper men and to delegates.

Now, of the five hundred copies of "The Scoop," Wall Street had been reading its share. It grew to look upon Henderson as the true friend of Kingsley and Chalmers. It began to assign its patronage and to choose Kingsley's Cabinet.

That night, the second before the convention, Worthington and Henderson conferred gravely. "The jig is up," said Worthington: "not on my say-so, Thomas; for that would not be fair to dear old Governor Clayton."

Henderson collided in the corridor with James Morgan Russell, one of the most enthusiastic of his new Wall Street admirers. At the bar, where the money of Russell rolled away, the political Brummell asked Henderson whether he thought an interview about the good feeling between Kingsley and Chalmers, the East and the West, might not be well given out. It seemed to Henderson that he recalled, as if by auricular photography, the words of Worthington that very evening: "What we could do if our candidates were as dovetailed as Kingsley and Chalmers, Thomas! But to them that hath it shall be given."

"I heard a big Clayton man envy that good feeling tonight," confided Henderson.

Russell departed at once, gulping, to write the interview, and Henderson sent his story.

O'Terrell and the others flew by like wrens with wayward nestlings. They had been on many wrong tacks this convention, while the unknown Henderson had made "The Scoop" and his Western journal famous. Nearly everyone of the newspaper men had a wrathful yellow telegram in his pocket. These urged all, in colored language, to forget Clayton and to realize that two gentlemen named Kingsley and Chalmers were to be the ticket. So widely had traveled "The Scoop."

HENDERSON leaned against a marble pillar to watch them. A familiar voice behind the post roused him. It was the silver organ of Congressman Worthington, who was telling a drowsy operator that he wanted to send a rush telegram. Henderson noted that Worthington's ivory brow was wrinkled and that his high-lighted eye was dull. He refrained, therefore, from troubling his good friend and true.

"Poor chap!" thought the newspaper man. "He will have to make his peace with the Eastern victors, and he has treated me white."

The cricket in a telegraphic sounder began to chirp, and Henderson, late operator, instinctively listened. He heard the operator call for "Main Office."

SENATOR RODMAN BLAKE [sang the cricket].—This press business is now at an end. H. has them all fooled on the East-West alliance. Off guard. When letter sprung, Clayton will win easily. You carried Chalmers religious letter with you. Express at once 444. W.

Henderson took counsel with a table in the bar, and before the text of the telegram faded from his brain he copied it. Then he read it over.

"Press business is now at an end," he mused. "'H. has them all fooled.' Who's 'H'?"

It required a full minute; but at the expiration of that time Thomas Henderson, reporter of politics, was ready to believe that he had been beautifully sold.

James Morgan Russell had just finished a graphic

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HIS SCHOOL REPORT

From a Painting by JOHN A. COUGHLIN

